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Gender, Class, and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V

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served as a residence until 1970, and is now a National Historic Landmark and museum.

In 1864 the Iowa legislature designated the school as a land-grant college under the Morrill Act of 1862. A railroad came through that same year, construction of Main began in 1864, the Civil War ended in 1865, and things began to grow. By 1869, when the Farm House was nearly a decade old, the college officially opened.

The Farm House remained a hub as the school grew. From 1868 to 1879, it was the home of President Adonijah Welch. Until 1884, students worked on the Model Farm five days a week in addition to taking classes. Until 1900, the school term ran from March to November in conformity with the farming season.

During the 1880s some Iowa farmers became upset over what they perceived as a drift towards a classical, nonagricultural curriculum at the college. A savvy group of activists led by "Tama Jim" Wilson and "Uncle Henry" Wallace staged a coup in 1890 to force out the college administration. The Farm House got new residents: "Tama Jim" moved in with his family and took over as professor of agriculture. When he left for Washington in 1897 to become Secretary of Agriculture, his protégé and successor, Charles F. Curtiss, moved in for a fifty-year stay (1897-1947) and helped the college gain an international reputation. The Farm House was modernized into its present form around 1910.

The book focuses on the people who inhabited the Farm House, as well as its changing appearance and role in the university. No fewer than 115 photographs, seven maps, six plans and drawings, three appendixes, and an extensive bibliography attest to solid scholarship, and the book clearly demonstrates the importance of thorough research as the foundation for historical restoration.

Gender, Class, and Shelter: Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture V, edited by Elizabeth Collins Cromley and Carter L. Hudgins. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995. xv, 272 pp. Illustrations, maps, plans, notes, bibliography, index. \$25.00 paper.

REVIEWED BY FRED E. H. SCHROEDER, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA-DULUTH

Like its predecessors in the series to which it belongs, *Gender, Class, and Culture* offers the best papers presented at annual meetings of the Vernacular Architecture Forum. And, like its predecessors, this volume presents the latest in the rapidly emerging methodologies and expanding scope of research in vernacular architecture. The very fact that "gender" is not used synonymously for "feminism" is a departure

from earlier volumes in the series. The opening chapter by Angel Kwolek-Folland, "Gender as a Category of Analysis," provides a valuable classification that does not obscure the subtleties and complexities of human interpretation of architecture that is often considered "ephemeral." Thus, especially in the case of women, artifacts are as important as structures if we are to understand "the meaning and experience of vernacular space."

The chapters on "masculine spaces" are eye-opening. Historically, largely male communities have existed in many times and places, as in logging camps, fisheries, and mines. Migratory work has been mainly male. Christopher Yip's study of "Association Buildings" in Chinatowns shows that the original West Coast migration to mining communities was exclusively male; workers expected to send money to support parents and families. After the Exclusion Acts beginning in 1882 blocked virtually all new immigration, the ratio of men to women in Chinatowns remained about the same, 19:1. In a study of the Farm Security Administration's camps for California migrant workers during the Great Depression, Greg Hise underscores the usual masculinity in the migrant labor force; when "Americans" (meaning white Okies) came with their families, New Deal architectural planners had to alter the pre-Depression labor camps to serve the needs of families.

As these examples suggest, much in this series is regional and local, and, especially for the colonial to mid-nineteenth century, of slight relevance to midwestern historians and preservationists. Nevertheless, some of the chapters are suggestive for Iowans. For example, Warren Hofstra's study, "Private Dwellings, Public Ways, and the Landscape of Early Rural Capitalism in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley," asks why it is that in a very ethnically diverse area, one house type came to dominate: the "I-house," which was also a predominant design in early Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri. (His answer: commerce and capitalism that oriented interest toward roads made the I-house's laterality attractive.) For those interested in either midwestern or male-gendered spaces, William Moore's chapter on Masonic lodge rooms is illuminating. For preservationists, Pamela Simpson's essay, "Pressed Metal Ceilings," is useful. But for me, the approach that Annmarie Adams takes in studying "Eichler Homes" (the West Coast version of post-World War II "Levittowns") is most valuable. She compares the architects' and developers' conceptions of how GI Bill families of the fifties should live with interviews and snapshot evidence of how the Eichler denizens actually used their homes. Children in particular "demolished" spaces carefully construed for an idealized nuclear

family by choosing to play in the streets and tunnel under the high fences to communicate with neighbors.

There are eighteen chapters in this volume on a wide range of architectural topics. With the copious notes and bibliography, readers and researchers can discover the most recent thinking about vernacular homes, churches, schools, and commercial structures.

Historic Black Landmarks: A Traveler's Guide, by George Cantor. Detroit: Visible Ink Press, 1991. xxx, 372 pp. Illustrations, timeline, bibliography, index. \$17.95 paper.

REVIEWED BY SPENCER CREW, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

In the initial pages of this book, George Cantor recounts a reference made to African Americans in one of the *American Guides* written during the Great Depression by the Federal Writers Project. The reference made by the writer was not very flattering and pointed out the limited information available at the time these volumes were created about historic sites associated with African Americans. Black Americans were seen as amusing sources of anecdotes rather than significant contributors to the historical development of the nation. They were largely invisible or silent members in the American historical story.

This disregard of black historical contributions has not changed dramatically in the intervening years. According to George Cantor, who has written several travel books, travelers interested in learning more about African-American history must search long and hard for information. Contemporary travel books still tend to ignore or provide only rudimentary information about historic sites associated with African-American events or individuals. Why this is the case is not always clear. In part it is due to the lack of knowledge many writers have about the contributions of African Americans. Their volumes often build on the work of previous travel authors and rarely make use of the research produced by historians in recent years. It takes a great deal of hard work and exploration of new and nontraditional sources to uncover sites critical to the history of African Americans. Not many travel book writers have been willing to put forth that effort.

Fortunately, George Cantor was willing to uncover the caches of information available about African-American historic landmarks. It was not a simple task. Many offices of tourism in individual states have been slow to generate information about black landmarks in their states. They do not necessarily see this information as useful or in very high demand by tourists they target. Consequently, the author had

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